

Remarks

The Office Action mailed February 9, 2006 has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 11-20 are now pending in this application. Claims 11-20 stand rejected. Claims 1-10 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Reconsideration of the restriction requirement imposed under 35 U.S.C. § 121 is respectfully requested.

A restriction to either invention I, consisting of claims 1-10 drawn to a method for assembling a rotor of a gas turbine engine, classified in Class 29, subclass 889.21, or invention II, consisting of claims 11-20, drawn to an apparatus for installing rotor blades to a rotor disc, classified in class 29, subclass 700, was imposed. In response, Applicants confirm the election with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group II, claims 11-20.

The requirement for election is traversed because the inventions set out by the claims in Groups I and II are clearly related. Applicants submit that a thorough search and examination of either Group would be relevant to the examination of the other Group and would not be a serious burden on the Examiner. Additionally, requirements for election are not mandatory under 35 U.S.C. 121. Accordingly, reconsideration of the election requirement is requested.

The objection to the specification is respectfully traversed. The specification has been amended to disclose reference numeral 416. For the reasons set forth above, Applicants request that the objection to the specification be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 13-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 112 is respectfully traversed. Claim 13 has been amended to recite “[a] tool in accordance with Claim 11 wherein each of the plurality of rotor blades being coupled to the rotor disc using said tool extends radially between a dovetail and a mid-span damper . . .”. Accordingly, claim 13 is directed to a tool to install a plurality of rotor blades on a disc. Claims 14 and 15 depend from Claim 13. For

at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 112 rejections of Claims 13-15 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 11-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Ritz et al. (U.S. Patent 3,872,565) is respectfully traversed.

Ritz et al. describe a seal installation fixture (20) for installing a seal in the head of a reactor vessel wherein fixture (20) supports the seal and automatically releases the seal when fixture (20) comes into contact with the head of the reactor vessel. Seal installation fixture (20) includes a ring (38), a hollow cylindrical hub (42), and a plurality of spokes (44) extending from hub (42) to ring (38).

Claim 11 recites a rotor blade installation tool for coupling a plurality of rotor blades to a rotor disc wherein each rotor blade extends from the rotor disc to a radially outer blade tip, the tool includes “ a blade engagement end configured to engage the plurality of rotor blades being installed between the rotor disc and the radially outer blade tip, at least one brace coupled to said blade engagement end at a first end of said at least one brace, and a guide end coupled to a second end of said at least one brace.”

Ritz et al. do not describe nor suggest a rotor blade installation tool as recited in Claim 11. More specifically, Ritz et al. do not describe nor suggest a rotor blade installation tool including a blade engagement end configured to engage a plurality of rotor blades. Moreover, Ritz et al. does not describe nor suggest engaging the blades between the rotor disc and the radially outer blade tips. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Ritz et al. describe a seal installation fixture for installing seals in the head of a reactor vessel wherein the seal installation fixture engages the reactor head seal at the outer periphery of the seal.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 11 is submitted to be patentable over Ritz et al. Claims 12-20 depend from independent Claim 11. When the recitations of Claims 12-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 11, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 12-20 likewise are patentable over Ritz et al.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 11-20 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 11-20 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kawabe et al. (U.S. Patent) (“Kawabe et al.”) is respectfully traversed.

Kawabe et al. describe an apparatus (10) for assisting the mounting of a tire-wheel assembly (1) onto an axle. Apparatus (10) includes a pair of opposite clasp members (11 and 12) that are configured to sandwich the tire-wheel assembly (1) from its side surfaces, a vibration applying machine (14) fixed to one of the clasp members (11 and 12), and fastening nuts (7) for fastening clasp members (11 and 12) at a given position.

Claim 11 recites a rotor blade installation tool for coupling a plurality of rotor blades to a rotor disc wherein each rotor blade extends from the rotor disc to a radially outer blade tip, the tool includes “ a blade engagement end configured to engage the plurality of rotor blades being installed between the rotor disc and the radially outer blade tip, at least one brace coupled to said blade engagement end at a first end of said at least one brace, and a guide end coupled to a second end of said at least one brace.”

Kawabe et al. do not describe nor suggest a rotor blade installation tool as recited in Claim 11. More specifically, Kawabe et al. do not describe nor suggest a rotor blade installation tool including a blade engagement end configured to engage a plurality of rotor blades. Moreover, Kawabe et al. does not describe nor suggest engaging the blades between the rotor disc and the radially outer blade tips. Rather, in contrast to the present invention, Kawabe et al. describe a mounting assist apparatus for assisting the mounting of a tire-wheel assembly onto an axle wherein the mounting assist apparatus engages the side surfaces of the tire-wheel assembly between opposite clasp members.


Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 11 is submitted to be patentable over Kawabe et al.

Claims 12-20 depend from independent Claim 11. When the recitations of Claims 12-20 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 11, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 12-20 likewise are patentable over Kawabe et al.

For the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 102 rejection of Claims 11-20 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully Submitted,



William J. Zychlewicz
Registration No. 51,366
ARMSTRONG TEASDALE LLP
One Metropolitan Square, Suite 2600
St. Louis, Missouri 63102-2740
(314) 621-5070